



ESSAYS ON ART

MAX WEBER

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ESSAYS ON ART

MAX WEBER

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THESE essays were written in the autumn of 1914 as part of a series of talks on art appreciation. In committing them to writing, my purpose was to help the student to recognize and to live the principles of art and to apply them in his work according to his own discernment. I am happy to be able now, to give these short essays a wider field in the hope that they may help to foster the love of art and its significance in life.

At no better time than this, could I express my appreciation of the encouragement given to me to write, by my friend, Leonard Van Noppen, whose wise counsel I gratefully acknowledge.

M. W.



Quality



ONE of the most spiritual and significant phases of quality is intimacy. It is a state of awareness, of knowledge, of the presence of things outside of ourselves; we mean here, inanimate things. Anything that has been shaped or constructed possesses a part of the life of the maker of that thing. It is that of his life which makes the existence of that thing possible. The maker lives in the things he makes. Even his tool becomes warm in his hand and palpitates with his very pulse. Then too, the moment I behold an object, an art work, it becomes more that very moment, for I put part of myself into it along with the life of its maker. For matter is of more worth when it is embodied with the spirit of the maker. A work binds its maker to the universe. Though the maker cease to be, the work he has created keeps on pulsating and rhymes his personality on on into infinity. Often it occurs to me that objects of quality wait for us; and when once we succeed in knowing it intimately, the object is more and we are more because of each other, or because art chooses us. It seems to me one of the most important functions of our daily breathing or living, this spiritual communion with objects — with works of art. We pray in belief,

but this art consciousness or plastic consciousness is belief in proof. The reality of art is its mystery. This brings us back to the principles of taste, mainly the power to discern through knowledge or by instinct.

Analysis	{	Both are plastically intellectual, i. e. —
		Using the hand-mind;
Synthesis		Using the eye-mind;
		Using the feeling mind, or the emotion.

A way to commune with the unknown is to imagine one's self being in the unknown. To find the quality in a work one must invest it with personal quality already acquired by him, the spectator or student. One's own quality will draw forth, will call out, will attract or magnetize the yet unseen quality in a work. This is almost as true of the spiritual as of the physical. To perceive quality is to possess quality. And even when we find quality in works, then the process of assimilation must begin. Food must first be digested. Simply to possess it one might starve. To possess art is to live it. It enhances every human faculty.

Analysis is more the act of the spectator; synthesis more with the creator. Appreciation is an analytic function—it is placid. Creation is synthetic—is the active participating. There are infinite avenues to the understanding of quality in a work. Its means, what is commonly called technique, may be said to be the mechanical side; its construction, its material side—the concrete. Then there are the qualities abstract. That which, regardless even of means, makes for rarity, for distinction; its intensity to evoke and to empower, or overwhelm, its spirit. Or it is that

indescribable something that makes for quality — that something which is in a work of art independent of its means — we might call it the soul of a work. That quality which is beyond words — it is feeling. Or too we might call it the artist or maker in the work.

The building is the architect, the picture is the artist, the symphony is the composer, the poem the poet. Not as some would have us believe that it is the dress or the mannerism that makes the artist. Detecting or sensing quality in a work of art is like finding an answer to one's seeking self. Such consciousness of growth is the great revelation in life. It is then that we feel our relationship to this great universe. It is this revelation which makes for that inquiry so essential to higher achievement and for better understanding and which therefore means a fuller and more inclusive life.

Finding finds and the found always seeks for more. That which makes for individual art is in a whole people, but it is he who can best reveal and voice that which would otherwise lie dormant in a people who is the artist. And the people find themselves in their great artists. The environment, religion, tradition, the very physical features of the country of a people, determine to a large degree the character of their art. Natural adaptability, sequence of time, thought and substance make for quality. Thus time has given us the variety of quality or character — Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Saracenic, Chinese, Indian, Renaissance, French, Spanish, Dutch, etc.

Quality is a certain purity, or distinction, in a work of art. That which makes for quality is the natural

adaptability, sequence and substance of time. Though these differ, the essence is the same.

Strangeness or peculiarity or singularity does not make for quality. Strangeness wears off, peculiarity in time even bores, and both perish — but real quality ripens and grows in excellence and becomes a plastic memory, virile with beauty. Real quality makes for age. It forms an integral part of time, sacred to the generations. Genuine quality outlives all fads, and makes for permanency that is ever refreshing. Quality is the highest spiritual embodiment in an art work that we can conceive. The rarest and highest quality comes only from the highest conception. Quality is the life of art, as art is the quality of life. Ethical or spiritual quality is kindness, charitableness, sympathy, love; strength or power is physical quality, while aesthetic qualities are those I mentioned above. But all these are inseparable in life and art. The qualities of art blend the spiritual, the ethical and the physical. Life and art are not apart. It is the wonder of quality in us, in art, in life, to desire, to crave, for still more quality. Quality qualifies itself only in this wondrous continuity. Using time is an aesthetic means of the art of life.

Development of taste or of quality, like the development of creative power, is infinite. As a guide and incentive one holds before him the indisputable ideals in works of art; these ideals are the principles we discussed. The creative mind makes principles flexible and art seems to solicit contributions from the inspired. Whatever form of so-called modern art might yet be invented or evolved, time, as always, will

decide whether its modernity or newness shall ever ripen with age and become part of tradition. The ancient was once modern, but will the modern become ancient?

Science dealing with facts and facts with use make possible endless physical or chemical combination. Material use is the great issue in science. Science experiments and its use or application is its proof. Science may advance as rapidly in the future as it has in the past. But physical science and metaphysics are *not art*, and cannot do for art. A machine is not a sonnet or a picture, nor is a logical syllogism a prayer; and a mechanical draughtsman's drawing of the intersection of solids or of the development of surfaces is not a thing aesthetic. But some there are who to be modern take it upon themselves to be the prophets and martyrs. They tell us things and do things that contribute as much to art, as calling all things by the same name does to intelligence.

Art is art, call it what you may, by any name. It has a distinct origin and a definite purpose. A prayer is a prayer, love is love, tears are tears, sorrow is sorrow. This does not define these, but before I might begin any sort of metaphysical speculation or rudderless thinking, I do know that a prayer is not a city.

I confess that such metaphysics make for sham and chaos and any aim at posterity with such effort goes amiss. Many ancient sins are covered with the cloak of modernity. Indeed, convenience is often only another name for freedom, but such freedom is the worst slavery. No art can be built upon a foundation of vagaries, or of fads. Ideals ferment art. Emotion is as the sunlight to the seed of art, and the seed in time is fruit. The

apple-seed craves for the apple, or it would cease to generate. But most of the fruit, if we please to call it fruit, of "modern art" degenerates and decays.

No more than one can satisfy physical hunger with ideals, can one appease spiritual starvation with mannerisms and cults. Art is spiritual belief or truth, the symbol of the most tender or virile instincts conceivable. To scorn or to slight the real of the past, the unswayable, makes one conspicuous but not creative. Creation is infinite in time, space and matter. Notority is momentary. The plastic spiritual principles or ideals embodied in the Parthenon, in archaic sculpture, in the Assyrian and the Egyptian, and in the color and design of Minoan and Persian, Chinese and Indian porcelains, rugs and paintings, are a permanent source of inspiration, and incentive to contributive achievement.

Spiritual Tactility



THE highest development of perception and of sensitiveness, will spring from the most tender interlacing, blending or correspondence of the several senses. Instinct contributes sensibility which begins in the embryonic state of human beings and in the period after birth until the senses begin to discern with the intelligence of childhood, increasing in discernment as life goes on. But even the instinctive or hereditary may be said to be that contribution to one's senses derived from parents in prior contact with the objective world according to their intensity of perception of such contact, as of density and the molecular formations of matter, of heat, cold, light, shape, size, sound, color, motion, time — all that makes for consciousness.

Thus we see that the senses are developed essentially through two avenues: the physical or the inanimate, and the spiritual or the wonderful, that is a sense of mystery in the being of things. This leads to what I might call intimacy of tactility — largely a plastic quality, which makes for spiritual plasticity, through our attitude or approach. This involves a miraculous action, a marvelous union of the family of the senses — inexplicable. The quality and the character of the act of perception, determine the quality of feeling, of understanding, of appreciating, of embracing. It is this spiritual tactility that brings us into closest touch and great-

est intimacy with the outer world until the one enhances the other. Even appreciation becomes creation through this awareness of the worlds without. There are always two cathedrals, two pictures, two symphonies — the outer and the inner — the one, the expressed; and the other in the spectator. Also the finite becomes the infinite through art. The material vase contains the spiritual essence of the vase of the creator, while the essence of the vase entire is in the spectator. This power of assimilation, of appreciation, of approach, of perception, depends largely upon the intensity of the spiritual tactility, or tactile intimacy, of creator or appreciator. To touch matter through sight, to color the invisible with memory of the visible, to hear through touch, to see through imagination, to prophesy or to evoke through memory; thus to interchange the functions of the senses in the process of perception while enlarging the spiritual range of the senses is the most real function of spirit. To thus personify matter with one's senses, embodying the inanimate with spirit is a sacred function — the piety of art. One might almost say that the tree speaks, the winds play, the sun shines and colors through the painter, the poet and the musician. All lies silent and in wait for the creative spirit to liberate it from its nature bounds. All that was born claims all, clamors for a rebirth of itself — for a higher, purer distinction or destiny. Nature creates, art destines. The laws of art gauge and control the destiny of matter or nature. Nature preordains; art destines — and its destiny is infinity. Between is man with his spiritual tactility.

Sometimes I feel that even inanimate objects

crave a hearing, and desire to participate in the great motion of time and its indentations. This is the secret of life, of growth, of development, of innovation, of the inner sprouting or the budding into being and of wanting to be the outer. The flower is not satisfied to be merely a flower in light and space and temperature. It wants to be a flower in us, in our soul. Things live in us and through us. A shingle is more than itself when it is a shingle on the roof, likewise with a brick in the wall, though its only beauty is its use. Things, objects, mutely cry to us, "Touch us, taste us, feel us, see us, understand us, learn us, make us more than we are through your association, through your tactile and spiritual intimacy." The use then that we make of matter is gauged by our power, our quality or our energy, to wield it, to adopt it, to shape it, to urge it on into the fourth dimension. The same lump of clay or the same pigments will assume different quality, different shape, in the hands of two persons. And clay is more than clay in the hands of a master. And we with our senses are the master works of God — governed by intellect and possessed of a spirituality limitless, of infinite power and quality. The word is more than a word; it becomes significant only through us.

Intimacy, phantasy, art, are born of the marriage of our senses with matter. New revelation will mean new art — not mere oral mechanics, mathematical philosophy, or metaphysics. Only stirring emotions and nuances of wisdom as jeweled or ornate mentality, can give rise to such art.

Spiritual tactility may be said to begin when

matter inanimate touches space. Animated spiritual tactility may be said to happen and to be, when we feel the reality or when matter, light, sound, temperature, reaches or touches us. It may be said to be the spiritual consciousness. It is like the finger touching the organ.

Spiritual tactility is the wonder moment when genius or creative energy comes in contact with matter and decides and shapes its destiny in the realms of art. Its value is its plastic spiritual worth in art — whatever form it be. It is the wonder moment when spirit meets matter, when inanimate substance meets the animate and therefore its life — its plastic destiny, is decided. There are other Parthenons, other symphonies, other Congo sculpture, other Gobelin tapestry, waiting for the master to breathe reality into them. The impetus to look with wonder into the future, we derive from our plastic spirituality. As space receives time, so space gives time and significance of life. This is infinity, and infinity is hope to live the yet Unknown.

Infinity is in the potentiality of time, space, matter. Spiritual tactility fires the frozen and moves the immovable. Through it man breathes his soul into matter.

Tradition and Now



TIME adds more to tradition every new day. To try to be traditional to-day may be as erroneous as some of the modern efforts in art that run away from time itself. They are beyond the last or the latest moment. They are before being. In science it would be absurd to go back to the remote past. While in art the further we go from the past the more scientific and self-conscious we become. Yet we know that we cannot express our "modern" emotions in the terms and means of the ancients. Indeed we must invent new means. But before inventing new means, how much and wherein have our emotions changed from those of the ancients? Scientifically the races have gone indescribably far ahead of the ancients, but spiritually and æsthetically where are we?

In recent years, art has been made into a science, and if not fully that, it has been dragged into metaphysical arenas. Some serious and inspired spirits have sought and are seeking to express the poetry of modern dynamics so full of marvel, peculiar to our age, but the most only mimic the dynamic and they would make us believe that this is the new art — this tendency toward the basest sort of realism and degeneracy.

Tradition is a stumbling block unless one knows how to use it. One of the greatest forms of creation is the binding of time and the making of continuity — or harmony of time. Acts of creation on

time are like the hammer beats of the goldsmith on metal,— with each beat there is more refinement. But it must be a material with hidden quality in the hands of an artisan with constructive purpose and a power to mold. Instead of studying or feeling the spirit of the ancients through their art — only their means by some are used. Many have dressed themselves in robes that fit them neither in form nor in color. Expression preordains its own means. It is the emotion, the inspiration, that stirs the individual creator, or an entire race, before its expression. Emotion cannot be sustained in the individual, and this is as true of an entire people. In the beginning of emotion, intellectual intensity is expressed with ardor and devotion — later it cools and whole races or groups are found busy practicing, either through stupidity or through boredom, the means that no more fit the spirit, if spirit it is. This is the history of academism. This is the history of art when it turns into metaphysical dogma or scientific processes or technique. This is the history of art without life. This is the life of “art” when it must turn to science or to the varied vagaries of the brain as an excuse for being. Such is the “fruit” of art when irresponsibility through despair sets in. This is the history of art movements when a grain of inspiration — if it is inspiration, is packed in cases, labelled, stamped and shipped, But like bad wine the label outside helps it not. And often enough we have received advance notice of a shipment of the newest art, but there was little to unload. Or we came away after much debate and harangue with spirit vexed and mind starved. This is the history of art when it is an art

of means and not of inspiration, or prophecy, or revelation.

In the history of art we may find whole periods or epochs when spirit was bankrupt, and when leather was distributed for gold. In the history of mankind, the intensity of emotion and its expression varied accordingly as religious ardor, or scientific discovery, or economic principles ruled the hour. This is certain, that great art reveals itself without loud verbal manifestoes. I have come to believe that these manifestoes are loud shouts that deafen, instead of being deep and silent and profound. This is new to art, but it is not new art. There is now an academy of manifesters and their manifestoes. It is art labelled with scientific titles. We have had whole ship-loads of Italian, French, Spanish and English flavors of art, hastily manufactured. But who can manufacture or ship real inspiration? Who can even talk about it? Who can name it? And if it has been expressed, was it not in too great a haste to warrant its continued pulsation? Or was it not hot-house art? Or is it not the last flicker of a dying light?

Materialism is now strong. It is become life's protection and gauge. In ages past beauty was use; now use is beauty. In past ages cathedrals were built, whereas now machines for life and death as well are built. And while ages past were not so scientifically eventful, yet I see and I feel, that they shall be better remembered because of their superior spirit and of the embodiment of that spirit in lasting works of art.

Wherein and how shall we find hope for new art in

this tormented age? There are those who cry: "We are tired of emulating. We want the newest new!" But I have noted the rapidity with which the new is arrived at, and how quickly tired of the newest these same ones become. They become tired of being tired of their own newness or novelty — not realizing that their own newness decayed. Means of art outlive themselves and become mediocre and monotonous, but spirit, hope, conception are ever new — new to every living person, as to whole races or epochs. The whole race of Egypt built the Sphinx and their temples. All Greece shaped the Parthenon. And in modern time, Cézanne did not write manifestoes with the first picture he painted, nor did he threaten to overthrow the universe with his brush and palette. And his influence after a life's work is to-day profoundly felt both by the young and the older generations.

It takes time for growth of thought and expression to sprout; like the plant, it needs time and heat and light and rain in proportion to its natural requisite. But now we have so many old masters before they are even young. Shall art be in the race with modern electric automatics? A thought is swift, and illumination is even swifter than the swiftest things, but art is not a scientific process. It is the ripeness of thought that produces art. Time is a museum that keeps its doors locked to unripe and hasty work. But art, if art it is, has its own reward in living through whole ages of darkness. This is proven by the contents of great collections of monuments, by temples and their interior decorations, in mosaic, in wrought iron, wood and stone carving and in stained glass.

Shall we ignore these and their creators? Or can we afford to throw all the past aside and make a new art? Where shall we begin and what if we do? Spiritual inner harmony ferments art. If that was the seed for art in the past, can it be the seed of art now? Are we spiritual, are we in harmony with ourselves and with our environment? Do we have the time to contemplate, to find out where we are, or who we are? What is the aim to-day?

These are the questions we must ask of ourselves before we write manifestoes, and illustrate them with our efforts at new forms. Are there new forms? I mean form as form in the domain of plastic art, the expression of human emotion, or spirit, or of a hope to reach a beyondness. Do we know and understand the antique. Have we outlived its spiritual use? Is it a foreign language to those who live so differently from the ancients? Is it art, or is it science, that proves to us that the old forms have outlived themselves? Have our spirits changed that we must change our art? Or do we want art, at all? Are we spiritually hungry? Or are our souls fed with the husks of materialism? If there is glory in war, what is there in art? Or if we need art, do we find that it must be in the sense of a shock? Have our nerves and senses so changed that we need instead of quiet, noise, and instead of grandeur, bulk? Have our dimensions, scales and relationships changed? Is our joy become a neurotic frenzy or is it a physical and a spiritual expression? Do we weep no more? And if we do, are our tears of water? Are our children merely our offspring, or are they our spiritual reproduction, the embodiment of our

noblest spirit-selves? Is society merely number in being, or is it quality in living? These things we must find out before we overthrow the old, if the old has become finite for us!

Inherence and infinity contain forms yet unborn. Do we listen? Do we feel infinity, do we put a part of ourselves in the inherent, to emerge with the conception of new forms? Have we no sorrow, no joy, as people of generations past? Have we so completely changed our humanity that we find we must reconstruct the principles of art? Do we need art? I mean painting, sculpture, poetry. Perhaps it is because of our feeling no need of the placid, plastic arts, that we try to find new forms and talk of art in terms of metaphysics instead of quietly living and making art as others did in the past, and as creative spirit always will.

Perhaps plastic art, no matter how revolutionary or realistic it may be, has become insufficient. Perhaps we need new forms of exhilaration and of excitement to make for us a new rest and a pleasure, more suited to our taste and to our leisure and to our economy as modified by the character of the whole system of modern life. Perhaps we do not need painting or sculpture, at all. Perhaps we need a new *architecture*, a new music, or a period of silence and a long rest. Perhaps we need a spiritual recreation. Then let us live for a while out-of-doors with the arts. Then child-like, return, and make a new beginning that may make for truer modernity in modern art. Art as we know it to be, or as we find it to be built upon the principles embodied in the great antiques. How shall the arts of the past serve us? Shall they at least help us to see how differ-

ent in emotion, in attitude and belief we have become from the races that created them?

With a great religious revival four centuries ago came the Renaissance. Shall we argue that art needs no urge, no impulse from an outside source, and that "modernity" itself is the excuse for most modern art outbursts. But then what is modernity, from where does it spring, and how? Whether we have changed or not, I believe, in spite of all the manifestoes to the contrary, in whatever tongue they be written or spoken, that the antiques will live as long as the sun shines, as long as there is mother and child, as long as there are seasons and climes, as long as there is life and death, sorrow and joy.

Means



MEANS in whatever form they be speak for us. If we work in color, pigment speaks for us. If we work in clay and bronze, clay and bronze speak for us. Our thoughts, our ideas of things, our words and language, speak for us; and so with every form of creative work or expression. Means are outside of us. Our power of mastering matter makes for means. The purpose of means is expression. Thoughts creative must pass through the doors of means. Means are the gates between the inner and the outer, between the real and the ideal, between the expressed and the unexpressed. The passage is made up of all species of matter that serve the spirit. The spirit as it passes through these gates between the outer and the inner must clothe itself with suitable apparel. At the marriage feast of the arts, the spirit comes clothed in a wedding garment. A range of costumes are ready to robe expression from the mediocre to the sublime. Homer's spirit at these gates chooses the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, David's spirit the *Psalms*, Greco's spirit the *Laocoon*, Bach's spirit his wonder fugues, and likewise with whole races, their art, their literature, and their other culture.

And so we find the great spirits dressed in simple vestments. The great are simple. And it is not the dress, it is the spirit dressed. It is not Dostoyewsky's novels, it is the essence of Dostoyewsky's spirit that we are able to read and to inhale through his marvelous

means — his novels. And so with Michael Angelo's Pieta, with the Parthenon of the Greeks, with the Prophets of the Hebrews. Means and spirit go together.

The spirit is more even though it may not be expressed, than any means if such exist only as means, or as cold technique. A color must be more than a color. A form must be more than a form; it must suggest the sacred more only found in the spiritual. Everything must be more than it is visibly. This seeming invisibleness is the realization and the wonder of the infinite. Means of expression and their scientifically derived terms will never answer for expression proper. Means and expression are two different things. Certain means may infer or suggest infinite vagaries, but art never found adequate expression in means alone.

There is order, number and relationship even in the non-material spheres. Ends justify means and even means justify means for a time, but expression, revelation or illumination flourishes not on means. The means of expression or the realization of perception is but transitional and momentary. Some means are merely intentions or experiments. The hunger of the human spirit cannot be satisfied with the means of "art" only. Means and only means mean nothing. Only expression gives life and significance. Creation or expression always has other forms of creation in its inherent purpose, and creation is revelation, never a befogging mystery and doubt.

Mystery infinite from revelation springs.
And mystery illumines only when itself it reveals.

Always it is expression before means. The intensity of the inner creative urge impels, chooses and invents the means. Means alone cannot build up an art. Often we find in the rare achievements of the past the simplest means employed to convey, to bring home to the heart, the greatest expression. Art does not lie in its means; it lies in its mission, in its purpose, in its message, in its prophecy. The difference of expression, of creative power, necessitates the difference in means. The spirit wields matter. Means are in matter and method, never in spirit. Means are indifferent to the quality of expression, while expression determines its own best suited means. Sometimes the spirit is greater unexpressed than expressed. For means may hamper or even bar expression. Means and methods are only the mechanism of art. In the architectonic process of a work, the spirit of expression creates the means, in the intervals of the process of formation. The spirit seems to call dormant matter out of chaos and to give it new birth, new destiny, new existence, new life in every work of art. It gives it a mission, it makes of dead or indifferent matter the very abode for the spirit. The spirit is born somewhere within, and calls upon its most appropriate means to help it install or realize itself in the outer, the visible, the perceptible. Expression loses much on account of means. In the history of art more has been felt than expressed. On account of means, silence has often been more expressive, more messageful, than even expression. For one to change his palette or his methods is not changing personality and its innate expression. The spirit must first change the inner color, the inner proportions, the inner balance;

then these will seek new means. One may speak and convey nothing. One may work and accomplish nothing. Occupying one's self with processes is to make of one's self an automatic machine. It is the search for richness of spirit and for grandeur of imagination that produces art, never the mannerisms of the cults. But this searching should be a consciousness of possession.

Technique has to some a devilish fascination that makes their work a machine. But the wonder and blessing of the spirit is that it can manifest itself best through the simplest means and that it knows of no technique. And a realization of this comes soon to every creative spirit. Ripeness is struggle, and virtuosity is never ripe. Technique has often frozen the spirit. I mean the technique of the schools with their isms, for such are periodic and local, and are full of vanity and propaganda. The great danger of technique is that often it misfits the spirit with wrong means and processes. The searching spirit is free from mannerisms, and almost unconsciously creates means suited to its expression, at the time of progress and of conception. Expression — creative energy, knows no bounds, while means are limited. Too often have plastic means been mistaken for expression proper. While it is difficult to say that expression should be conceived independent of means, yet I hold that that which prompts expression is the same for all the arts. Indeed expression and means are firmly linked, but the two must not be confused, nor can the quality of the one redeem the failure or deficiency of the other. Lack of spirituality or of poetry will never be disguised by facile

means. For the craving spirit, if starved, cries out in time: "What have the means expressed? How has the expression served the soul?"

Expression is expression only beyond its means. It is the essence of the creative spirit conveyed by means, for which the world waits. Freshness of spirit or the desire to reveal will call for new means, but such new means do not mean a new revelation; and as for the new in art, I feel safe in saying that the oldest old is the newest new. Art lies in spirituality, in nobleness, and in virile placid beauty and always upon such qualities it depends, to evoke its own means.

The feeling or need for an intense color will choose an intense pigment, the feeling or necessity for the beauty of interlacing of areas will choose its essential geometric warmth or austerity. The imagination or conception of an arrangement of forms or of a particular gamut of color in a given rectangle is not a matter of means, but an inner spiritual vision. The yet unexpressed chooses its own means for the expressed. Means of expression do not find or reveal; it is the craving of the spirit for birth that finds its means in its appearance upon the outer visible spheres. When the expression of the creator reaches out and enters the spectator, the message is supreme, and the means are either forgotten or at most are only secondary.

It is not the means that explain or declare the vision, it is the essence of the means, which in turn is itself of the spirit. To substitute a mockery of technique for the means that convey a true spiritual expression, is to play the most fallible burlesque of the intellect. But such attempts are never more than the abnormal or

despondent outburst of the vain and deluded, who prepare their own destiny — death. To the queer, resort only the impious, the spiritless, the vacant of mind and barren of heart. And it is not difficult to be queerer than the queerest, for the queer is the natural expression of the charlatan, and cynicism is but the maniac laughter of intellectual sacrilege, of impotence, of despair.

Things

Name not things ye see,
If ye do, then no more they are.
Hurt not intimacy by loud calling,
Name not, frighten not, molest not
Things — the holiness of things
Which intimacy brings.



WE speak about things, but we seldom hear the things speak to us. By things I do not mean events, politics, wars, or even plays. I mean things in the three dimensions, made and shaped by hand and taste. Things useful and spiritual and intellectual. Usefulness, spirituality and intellect in the existing standards of education are classified separately. Things spiritual are usually understood to mean religion. Things intellectual are meant to be information, news of discoveries, wars, international intrigue, all the isms and the ists. By things I mean objects of use, houses, clothing, food, implements, utensils and their functions. Unfortunately art is set apart from everything. Art is in the parlor and in the museums and is seen but several hours in the year. Some never see it. Art is a luxury according to the common understanding. Unless an art work is centuries old and is valued in the thousands, it isn't authentic art. Yet some old things are very bad. Culture has been too mental and too verbal. Schools and their

isms and vagaries and social formalities have been detrimental to real culture. Culture will come only when every man will know how to address himself to the inanimate simple things of life. A pot, a cup, a piece of calico, a chair, a mantel, a frame, the binding of a book, the trimming of a dress . . . these we live with. Culture will come when people touch things with love and see them with a penetrating eye.

As a nail, or a screw or a bolt is essential and is a part of a whole machine, so is every simple thing a part of the whole spiritual, living, moving cosmos. I would much rather be able to shape things on the anvil, or in the kiln or to make a table or a cabinet, or to design a public hall, or theatre, than to be a lecturer on the history of literature or of the arts and crafts. I would much rather make a foot stool than to spend my time fishing for the origin of the root of a Greek or a Chaldean word. I would rather dig up things by the roots in a garden I have dug and sowed myself. For words in themselves are nothing, they are an abstract equivalent of things. Words in the dictionary are indifferent. Weight in itself is nothing, it is the thing that has the weight that is the thing. The measure itself is nothing. It is the thing measured. The compass is a marvelous thing in the hand of the mariner. But it is the direction in space it marks, or its significance, the places it guides to, that are important. It is not the abstractness of the thing, it is the concreteness.

Light is more when it illumines things. It is the things that are important. Theoretical quality or beauty is absolute nonsense. It is quality and beauty in things that count. Speed, power, is nothing

. . . it is all in things. Thinking thoughts is sheer waste, often purposeless. Thinking thoughts about things, fermenting action, is creative. Ideas of ideas are futile. Professional thinking is destruction. It is a mental vandalism of the concrete. To think is to see with the eyes upon the memory of things in time and place and environment. To think is to speak with inner sight upon the concrete.

Education has heretofore been much too aristocratic — it made for idlers and for professional rhetoricians, from whom has sprung crime and degeneracy and scandal, while the humblest occupation is in reality far nobler than any of the so-called higher vocations.

Materialism has thrown things out of scale and proportion. It has distorted values and blurred the nuances of the worth of things. Labor is regarded as slavery. To be idle is to be outside of things. It is to starve the senses and to narrow the intellect. The necessity of engaging the senses in the perception of color and form in daily life is overlooked.

We are in things. I need a cup or a garment; so much of my life's need is in them that they are essential to my life. Likewise with my need of objects and things whose beauty is their use and whose use is beauty — a picture, a sculpture, a rug, a necklace. A room is empty — a thing is brought in and I am no more alone. With science we exist or perish, with art we live and hope. Through art we can sow the highest form of life. We can embody quality in objects of use. Through knowing things we are better able to discriminate, to discern, to compare things of matter with spirit.

Things arouse the senses of perception. Through things I feel tied to earth. Everything lives — I live with things. Things have individuality, distinct characteristics, color, form, size, substance and texture. To know things is to live with more subtlety, refinement and purpose. It is to make of things the environment. What we call bad taste would lessen, so that material would not be wasted on the non-useful and ugly. Good taste is not in accord with the covetous spirit; it discards the ugly, it chooses quality not quantity. To be covetous is to remain spiritually or aesthetically in poverty. To possess good taste is to own the sun and moon and stars. The whole world is had in spiritual possession. Richness in spirit and ripeness of taste make for highest culture. Intellect develops through a spiritual tactility, through love and understanding of the principles that when embodied in things make for quality and for distinction. To cherish things, to reverence things is to cherish one's own self. Life would be barren without matter formed into beautiful proportion, aside from its use.

We often hear of the "practical turn of mind." Yes, and they are practical whose minds are filled with contracts, measures, weights, prices, profits, war maps. To live with merely a useful table is to live with so much useful lumber made to serve the purpose of a table. And why have a table? Savages used the ground. But to have a table that is of fine proportion and at the same time useful, is to live with the spirit of the maker of the table. A table or house that is merely useful serves only the animal in us, but things of proportion, rhythm, color, evoke the God in us. Things of money value

are obvious, even though they be diamonds and rubies. To pass indifferently or blindly an object of good proportion, color or design, is like passing and stumbling over physical things. It is spiritual blindness. There is a spiritual death of the senses while physically they may be normal and alive. Yet if the senses are numb the intellect grows dull and colorless.

Things of quality, providing we are sensitive to them, draw us out of ourselves. Through things we ever establish new relationships between ourselves and the principles that underlie things. The simplest object may have embodied in it the finest degree of excellence. Instinctively man is an industrious animal. Neglecting the making of things, of living and of loving things, the student of mental sciences or theories falls back upon himself instead of upon things, hence the mind grows morbid, even abnormal. Mental depression and sophistry set in; the spirit of joy, play and fruition decays. Things help us find an equilibrium always, while ideas and suppositions often drop us into a sea of mud. And there is nothing more sad than a helpless philosopher with locked hands and a stagnant mind.

I sometimes think the factories or shops are the real universities and that the universities are the factories. Better a brawny sensitive hand, a keen eye, a tender touch, a creative mind and a vivid spirit, than to be a hazy, helpless and useless theorist. Better things of beauty and use from the hands of man, than the wandering theories that weary the flesh and starve the soul. He who appreciates the principles of proportion, harmony, balance, symmetry, in simple objects and in works of art, finds that those qualities are in him,

and it is only through things that one discerns himself. These principles tell the spectator that these are principles of life, and man has expressed them in form, in things as a part of himself. Through the understanding of ideals we cement the real to us. And while these are but plastic principles in objects, yet, when felt by the spectator, these principles become spiritual in him. Thus art and life are not apart. Art foundations life.

Preparing to See

What a dome silence makes!
What music, what words are in it!
For what it echoes is not all of now.
All music and all words are there.
For when I speak or when I sing,
Mine own with other echoes blended I hear.
With the sound and the color of my voice
Time to time I bind.
Strange is the echo, but real is the echo
Then why fear one's own echo-self?
Though I call not and the space-dome silent be,
My echo, my tone-self is there —
In space with infinite echoes it hovers.
With whatever word or vision silence I imprint,
That my echo-self sends back to me.
My echo here
Is myself everywhere —
My echo everywhere.



JUST I not stand under a dome of silence to see? And this stillness ferments a mood of peace, of contemplation. Yesterday I saw something. I took the memory of that thing with me. I knew more. I felt more. I wanted more. No one could tell me better what I saw, and no one knows how much more, and what more, I must yet see of that thing for my satisfaction. Some one tells me what he saw in

the same thing, but I am certain from his description that that person saw quite a different thing. He saw himself therein, and I saw myself. But I did not see my whole self and therefore I had to go back to look at least once again. No one can use another's senses, nor can it satisfy us to depend upon others to see for us. The best gauge is one's own experience. Knowing this, I depend upon my own sight to believe and to see.

Sight is the all embracing sense of the other senses. Without sight we are less than if we were without any other sense. Seeing, like hearing, demands tranquillity and peace, dignity — spiritual focus. One of the deficiencies of general culture in modern times is the lack of the power of observation. Real seeing is not a *lens* process. It is mind sight, mind operating, evoking comprehension, grasp, tactility through seeing. Sight or seeing must not be limited to merely the earthly or the existent. To see a measurable height is also to see the immeasurable dimension. It is then a vision. It is to penetrate with the light of the mind all that the eye beholds or all that the eye touches. To see a thing is to see its inherent spirit, as the X-ray sees the physical internal structure of matter. To see is to throw the light of one's soul upon objects, illuminating them with a spiritual transcendence or radiance. To see many things by momentarily casting one's eyes upon many things is to see but a blur, which like a storm befogs the mind. To see is to think. To see is to awaken the inner, the potential, with the reality of the outer. Sight when infused with spirit makes the outer world address itself to the inner, and when

thought takes cognizance of this correspondence, it is like the spark of two currents.

To see an art work casually is a pleasant experience, but to come in touch with the vision, the spirit of the maker of it, is seeing in participation and it is then not only a gratification but an exaltation. For I feel that through art fresh sight is still in its living process, penetrating the infinite unknown. A superior art work finds a destiny of great distinction; an inferior work unmakes itself through this time-filtering process by not being looked upon again and again. Spirit cements matter forms; without spirit no significant forms can be built. To become intimate with an art work one must unmake and make it again with his eye-hands and mind-eyes. Thus one not only sees the ensemble but the units, and one can more easily enter and feel the intervals of time and of space and the moods composite in the work of art in its plastic formation. To see is to ask, to discover, to discern. To look is to listen to the silent. Through one's eyes the outer worlds make their impression or imprint upon the inner visual screen, and this the mind sees and gives over to feeling. The result is the proof of the quality of sensitiveness and refinement and of the alertness of the receptive consciousness. Seeing is a gift — a blessing from God.

The great silent mountain, the vastness of the ocean, the great worlds of colored matter in light must be *heard* through the eye. I feel that the inner feeling of awe and grandeur is a spiritual breathing and hearing. When the heart upheaves it is quite different from the mere act of respiration. This silent inner breathing of the atmosphere of the fourth dimension is audible, lum-

inous music to the soul. It is the spirit symphony heard by the senses in attendance.

Memory colors the gone and apprehends the coming. One cannot remember the symphony as aurally organized colored sound volumes or forms with their string and brass and wind atoms floating through unbounded space. One includes in his memory of such music the very mass of the musicians, their individual position and their geometric arrangement; also chandeliers, aisles, balconies, faces and dress. All things enter into the color of the memory of the music. Sight or observation of things result in a more emphatic, a more impressionable memory. The memory sees the play of life after the fall of the curtain. It binds scene with scene, act with act, epoch with epoch. Memory of sight fills emptiness of space, as memory of music fills silence. Memory of sight pre-arranges and even ordains. With memory of sight I lift and transport whole spheres. Then I live and possess all that my eyes ever beheld, and my imagination projects that memory into still more infinite spheres. Memory can relive the gone. Memory of sight is the great spiritual vision windowed into the infinite. Through memory of sight the whole universe enriches us. The eye is the ever-grasping sense. To see, to remember, is to prepare as for prayer. To see, to penetrate the yet unseen, the yet unborn, spiritually, is to keep clear the vision.

The Urge in Art



LIPE EXPRESSION is an answer to a spiritual call. A voice, a power, a god of art hidden somewhere in our spirit-self, calls us, selects us, urges us to tell, to give proof — plastic proof of our consciousness. To one thus chosen, expression is inevitable. It becomes a necessity, a hope. One must express himself if he hears this inner call, or else his spirit stifles and his hope smothers. Once one hears this inner call, his sole purpose becomes expression. It is through us that time passes, and it demands of us proof of having been in us, and of our having been in it. Without proof time fills whole ages with darkness. Time asks for souvenirs from us to bring to the yet unborn, whether it be a Totem Pole, a Hopi Katzina, a Buddha, a Chichen-Itza, a Wingless Victory, or a Venus de Milo; whether it be a crude drawing on the handle of a tool; whether it be in tattooing, or in a Bampense head of Kassai. Once we treasure time, the urge in us to fill time with light is beyond earthly measure. As creative beings we are like stars in time.

Physical well-being, or existence, requires food and shelter, but life in its highest cannot live without art. The soul craves for nourishment and if the spirit be starved, animalism and materialism set open the doors that lead to the dark chambers of horror and waste. By spirit I mean the aroma, the significance, the exaltation, the flower, the wonder of our several active living senses. Physically, the senses are for use.

Spiritually, the senses are for beauty, but in higher life the physical is subservient to the spiritual, as use is to beauty. It is this strife between the ideal and the material that proves the spiritual worth of whole races or nations as well as of individuals. This struggle in us for a high human excellence gives birth to that inner urge for creation. Art is the symbol of proof of the better in us. Every art work signifies the victory of the ideal over the material. And we have blackest proof of the reverse in our day. War is waste and destruction, while the function and mission of art is creation and harmony.

Expression is born in stillness and in solitude. It is as if one were listening to time and telling what he hears. That telling might be art, literature, science, or philosophy. If it is plastic, it cannot be in words or in theories. It is this pressure from within that demands of us the firmest grip upon matter in order to make it tangible. Hence the more real the means, the more real is the ideal. As there are infinite numbers of molecules and even atoms in the parts (however infinitesimal) of various materials, so much are there molecules, if I may term them so, or atoms of thought, of phantasy, of emotion, that urge on their shape, their character, as the inherent dynamic powers that shape matter. It is this union or contact of thought and matter, this psychic oscillation, that causes the inner urge for expression. The intensity of the gifts we cultivate, or possess by birth, determines the excellence of our creation. Principles become only vague theories and finally perish unless their cementing forms, molecules or atoms, are organized into art forms

which satisfy the spirit of man. Principles live only in the works they govern. They must be embodied in clay and sound, etc. Then a pause — and then on rhythmically to more expression. Thus from person to person, from age to age, from clime to clime, time bejewels itself with the necklace of these jewels.

Art is the real history of nations. Their politics, their wars, their commerce, are but records, as the calendar or the clock is not time itself. They are the material necessities and means of counting up time. The destruction of Gothic cathedrals and monuments is like cutting an artery in the veins of time. For art bleeds with even a thicker and hotter blood than the blood of animal or human life. Nature takes care of itself and easily duplicates or reproduces itself, while art can not do this. Often it lets whole ages go by without asking for a contribution. Nature becomes art only through us. Indeed art is nature. Life is precious, but the purpose of life, the urge, the significance of life are the flowers: art, literature and philosophy. It is this inner urge in us that cries "Create, Create, Create." Creation is the highest form of life. Destruction is the lowest form of death. Sometimes destruction may be necessary, but destroying something before we have anything to replace it, is sheer malice and vandalism. It is answering or satisfying the devil's urge — the material urge. Some may even lose the distinctions between evil and good, between beauty and mediocrity and justify each without discrimination, but then, why not call the sun the moon; and iron, water? Such argument is futile and even blasphemous. Creation

makes for consistency, for truth and for belief and we draw these qualities only from our spiritual gifts.

Those who create and feel the urge for creation doubt not; and they seek not for excuses not to create. They seek not satisfaction in corrupt argument or in warped theory or logic, as are those who listen not or are deaf to the inner call. Such poison the flowers of life, the color and the aroma. Creation is realization. Metaphysical argument is never more than verbal supposition. Even physical science proves the blasphemous folly of words without deeds. And even words are nothing if their material equivalent is inconsistent with the idea intended to be conveyed. Quality of plastic art or of music may be spoken of, and described in words — the common medium — but the quality and even the purpose of the music, of the poem, of the sculpture, of the carving, of the picture, is regardless of the words or the terms that may be used in naming or describing them.

Participation that is personal experience, or creative work, is the sole and most real conviction. Words are nothing without the power of evoking ideas. Looking into emptiness or space and calling: "Ship, lion, John grass," does not mean that these things are there. And I ask those who would say "I imagine them there," how and where they got the first idea of such things as ship, grass, John, if not from previous visible, touchable, weighable, movable, existing, living things, like grass, ship, lion, etc. Even a dream, however phantastic, is the child of a real experience. Things with their peculiarities and attributes of character begin to impress themselves upon our memory through experience — that is, through

our senses, and if the ship had been called lion and the grass John, it would make no difference. But in reality the ship is not John, and though some insist, for the sake of modern art or literature, that the ship may be John, yet we can easily infer the significance of this "modern" language, or of such creative liberty. I should rather say destructive liberty. Such "art" makes dark gaps in time. To urge on expression is to reach out for matter in all of its phases. Thus only is art born.

Revelation



NATURE in all of its phases, moods and seasons waits for man to speak for her. For man to tell of his spiritual communion with nature is art. Nature is art through man. When art builds on art, art dies. When, however minute, art comes through nature, it plants its own seed for its blooming in seasonable time and place. Man is born and finds nature waiting for him. Nature waits for man and his inspiration for hope of realization. In the womb of nature there are as many art forms for the future as there were for the past. It is only when one addresses himself to nature in deep reverence, in silence and isolation, that he hears response. In this absorption one hears voices from the mother inherent. It is a gift as well as a blessing to commune and to express in the language of art this communion. Art then tells not of the obvious. It is the essence of nature, its form and mood being made concrete through man's phantasy, to furnish the appropriate plastic means that make for art.

When nature is reborn in us, it calls itself art. Creation, or revelation, is getting things out of the womb of the inherent. It is an act of appearance, of illumination, and of growth as marvelous and as tragic as is birth. It is like birth, with greatest joy in its greatest pain. Creation makes more infinite the source of its origin, as it makes more infinite the child of its inherence. The inherent and the visible or audible become more

resonant and vibrant through inspired creation. Infinity expands, and revelation itself broadens its bounds. Revelation marvels at itself and its own wonder makes for more. It is good to imagine more yet unrevealed, that we may in imagination live with the creations of the future. To apprehend this is to put time into time. Inherence is pregnant with the future. Revelation lifts the pall that shrouds infinity and in this is discovery or contribution. To reveal is to focus the sun of our senses upon lifeless inherence and to make it sprout into life and light. To reveal is to plough and to plant.

Real poetry is not mere sing-song pleasantry or description. It is and should be prophecy. Art is not mere representation, it is and should be interpretation — revelation. One picture, one poem, one symphony, should be so potential as to cause to vibrate and to urge on out of inherence, still another symphony, poem or expression, and infinitely thus. What in nature is hidden, art must reveal and make significant. Revelation is art inducing other art again. Art must always surpass itself, with promise of more than itself.

Nature's secret or prophecy is in stillness, in a waiting to be heard by art. Its pulse is its mood, its music its time, its essence the seed of fruitful ages not yet born. I crave to know and I listen and I feel and I see. Nature inspires me by its living rhythm. Its waves of stillness that vibrate over its prairies, in its forests, over its mountains and valleys, and its oceans, in the solidity and strength of its mountain strata, in its minerals and in its hidden rocks, stir in me the feeling of visible cathedrals and towers, and of orchestras and poems.

Nature impels me to personify the inanimate. Art is its tongue. Poetry speaks the dialogue between the seas and the continents, between the seasons, between the sun and the moon, and between ebb and tide. Art like an orchestra plays nature's winds and storms cyclonic, and makes audible its breath, till we live its joy of creation and its tragedy of waste and long for still more creation and revelation. We are the poetry and music and philosophy of nature. Our life is its flower. We, with our human power to reveal, are nature's art, and our revelation of nature's inherence is our art. The Parthenon or the Rheims Cathedral or a Buddha Temple or an electric dynamo once slept in the quarries and dreamt in geometry.

Works of art are man's revelation of nature's contents. He who reveals prophecies. We know nature better through art. Science proves to the mind; art reveals the heart. To infer from the visible the invisible, to penetrate the opaque, to soar high into space, and to dive deep into the seas, to walk through fissures to the centre of the earth, to imagine one's self being a fish or a bird, is to penetrate more into the spheres of the unknown. To imagine one's self discharging the functions of inanimate bodies is to ally one's self to the inanimate for the time and to penetrate the world of matter, that asserts itself to us through the forms of art. To invest all darknesses and emptinesses, and all inanimate objects with human energy and feeling, is to reveal the mystery which art alone can reveal. To transplant mentally whole continents, whole cities; to shift the immovable, to bring the past into the present, to bring the distant near, is revelation. The psychic or spiritual energy made

plastic is the purpose of a work of art. Its process of formation lies in its spreading out into infinity upon the waves of time and of light. For the creator to cause this vibration, is one phase of revelation, and for the spectator to receive these vibrations is still another phase. Inherence on its way to infinity passes through the creator, doing this of its own accord, in measure and in scale with the capacity of the creator, becoming of form and color, and of dynamic force, through the human sense. Inherence is the allness of all we can imagine. It ranges from a chaos of matter and space, from nebulous light and gases and hidden dynamics to the highest form of composition or organization achieved by man in art and in science. To become aware of this innerness is revelation; to bring light into the outer worlds is revelation. And the making more endless the endlessness of outer forms by incessant endeavor to find new relationship and a new interlacing, is still more revelation. Revelation is not merely surprise. It is a spiritual awakening. It is the blessing of life. Revelation makes for love of life. It relieves one of doubt in his share of infinity. It brings the breathlessness of joy. Our spirits clap their hands and the sound is music to the soul. In the moment of revelation we live whole ages and we join the generations on their way into timelessness.

Art Consciousness



ARTHLY possession is material wealth. The consciousness of art, or emotional perception, is the great gift of life. Creative power is rarest, and an art consciousness or an art love is even more rare than earthly possession. Believing or having faith in a supreme love or power or virtue is the life privilege of every human being. I often believe religion to have been made too useful while art, seemingly a luxury, is in reality most useful and practical. Material wealth is satisfied to possess; art livingly enjoys in being.

An art consciousness changes the significance of all in time and space and matter. It modifies hope, it changes proportion, it makes for new number. It flavors the entire reason for being. The consciousness of art, which ranges in intensity from creation to appreciation, develops a richer and riper humanity. This art consciousness is the possessing of the spirit of things, rather than the matter of things. The possession of things is one's legal right to things — but an art consciousness means the possession of human right — the spirit of things. Material possession is an outsideness. Spiritual or art consciousness is an insideness. Material possession is finite; spiritual consciousness is infinite. Nor is there a monopoly of the art spirit. There is no apothecary weight or avoirdupois measure of art. There is no art text book, there is no school of the science of art. Nor is there a lecture

wherewith one can explain away this art consciousness. To try it is to drain it of its spirit as the essence of a fruit or of a flower is drained, while its form is destroyed. This art consciousness is an individual possession of a universality — of a grandeur that is imbedded in the heart and that hovers over all in light and dark and in space and in matter, in all the elements. It is our soul-echo and even a part of our soul that reigns in spheres outside of us. An art consciousness thus awakens us to more than ourselves. It helps us to grow from within toward the outer and the more personal and intimate. It finds for us parts of our self outside of our conscious body self here. It is our spirit self we recognize in forms and colors and sounds and light and motion in the wonderful being of the all. This art consciousness is the earthly heaven that ties us, of this visible sphere, to spheres never to be metaphysically accounted for, but only spiritually felt. It binds us to Godliness in the spheres most real. We are realizing more than ever that art is created only through an art conscious of the inherent pregnant with seed for the real. Conception which art consciousness makes concrete outwardly, makes concrete also the inner hovering infinity of the spiritual. Art awakens us to a farness, to a beyondness. The materialist believes and accepts the obvious, the immediate. He is satisfied with the immature, the uncouth and the vulgar. That which is wrapped in layers of time and which ripens to tenderness, is out of his reach. To live on without this spiritual consciousness is to live in time without light — it is to go about like the hands of the clock that know not even the wonder that they count time away, that know

not that they move from the sun to the moon. To be without this spiritual consciousness is like living in a house without light, and spiritual atmosphere.

In earthly loneliness many gods of joy may dance. An art consciousness brings happiness such as love brings, and faith brings. Art avoids the immediate and will suffer itself through materialism on to the beyond. Art consciousness is not like a religious fervor or fanaticism. It is a cool placid harmony with an understanding of the spiritual significance of form, of the visible Godly fabric. It is engendered of a great range of taste and of emotion and is normal and healthy. It is not a sickly or morbid aestheticism. Nor is it a science of art. It is, I might say, a clear logical spirituality which weighs and discerns; and engages us always in the most valid and vital. It brings out the intrinsic values and establishes relationship. It quickens the inanimate. It causes stillness into music, matter into form and makes darkness light. It makes for a life spiritually intellectual.

It is not so much the lack of religion as the death of art that has caused much of the present strife. The spirit and glory, the colored atmosphere that lives when art flourishes is gone. We must awaken it, arouse it, coerce it, but we cannot hope to do this with distorted values, with false motives and neurotic aesthetics. We must realize that we cannot urge on the spirit with scientific speed or with dynamos. Creation is rare and always will be, but art is nothing if it does not stir or kindle the art consciousness in a people.

Art consciousness will come through a greater art conscience in the creative artist or artisan. When one listens to the rhythmic tapping of the rain, or the roar

of the winds, the clash of thunder, or the sighs of the ocean; when one discerns the color differences, the form, and song fugues in matter-form, and out of all this perceives the voice and the touch of inherence in the several kingdoms of nature; when one is susceptible to the silences that speak, to emptinesses that are full, to the seeming vague or vacuous that teem with life — that is the art consciousness. In the creative spirit the emotion is so intense that he frees himself only by giving birth to his emotion through chosen art means, making room thereby for intenser emotion — and this, the aesthetic rhythm and the music of time, is the art consciousness.

The art consciousness is the human consciousness of the God in man. He becomes conscious of art or inherent art whose senses become highly spiritually susceptible. Through art consciousness a great tenderness and subtlety is born. It takes enormously but its recompense is heavenly. It involves a keen and lively appreciation of principles. It goes further when the person, alert to the innerness of art, of the unborn in art, becomes either creator or appreciator. This needs no metaphysical treatise. It is as clear as crystal. The big thick books on aesthetics are merely books on aesthetics — but not art, living art itself, nor art in the inner vision, in the throbbing emotion.

The art consciousness is the great life consciousness. Its product and the appreciation of its product are the very flower of life. Its presence in man is Godliness on earth. It humanizes mankind. Were it spread broadcast it would do away with that dry, cold intellectualism, which, dead and unfired, always seeks refuge

in pretending to be more than it is. Art or art consciousness is the real proof of intense genuine human sympathy. It oozes spiritual expression. Were it fostered it would sooner solve the great modern economic problem than any labor propaganda. A lack of this art consciousness, on the part of both capital and labor, is one cause of this great modern struggle. Were this art consciousness more general, material possession would be less valued; the covetous spirit would soon die out. Art socializes more than socialism with its platform and its platitudes. Economists go not deep enough into the modern monetary disease. They deal only with materialism. They concentrate only upon what is obvious, the physical starvation of the toiling class, but never do they see or seem to realize the spiritual starvation or the lack of an art consciousness in both capital and labor. They would argue that the material relief must come first. I reply, now as always, we must begin with the spiritual. I do not see, however, how the spiritual or aesthetic can be separated from the material. The common solution of this great problem is too dry, too matter of fact, too calculated, too technical, too scientifically intellectual and not enough intellectually imaginative. Art consciousness is not merely a form of etiquette, nor a phase of culture — it is life — the quality of sensitive breathing, seeing, hearing, developed to a high true normal spirituality. Man would value man more. The wonder of and the faith in other human beings would kindle a new social and spiritual life.

To prove that there is anything new is very difficult. It is rather a replacing of things and of epochs, and a

new juxtaposition thereof that make for the newness of the old. Inherence, the now beginning and now ending of the allness of all, contains in its endlessness the new of the old. *Emotional* truth or *spiritual* logic is most severe and stern, and infinitely more embracing, than any intellection. That which has always been quality in art — the essence of the expression of emotion, of spirituality brought to earth, brought to the senses by means of art forms, that we and also generations after us, will find to nourish the spirit, and the emotions and it will be as always the essence of emotion. The soul will not be satisfied with substitutes for its own godly nutrition; it will demand the highest expression of revelation. This cannot be calculated emotion, it cannot be the means of conscious, frozen sophistication — or metaphysics — however well meant. The plant will not grow in showers of sand, when by nature it requires dew and rain. It will not bloom or color or form in the light of a lamp when it needs the sun. The sun coming in contact with its flower part in the flower, will make the flower that delights the human spirit with its beauty and its aroma, until the flower is itself a little sun to warm the soul.

To calculate is to bar out infinity. To intellectualize is to smother the breath of fancy, yea, of hope. The art consciousness in us is the mild whisper of the Gods that awaken to voice in us. With such emotion Giotto painted and built his tower; with such emotion, Greco painted, Beethoven composed and Paganini played. With such emotion the creative spirit builds form out of chaos.

To intellectualize emotion, is like holding the mirror

in front of itself. I walk on the lonely prairie, the sun shines upon me and the earth. The winds blow by me and about me, carrying to me the aroma and the song of the prairie and of the trees; and when the light is my guide, the color my joy, and the wind my orchestra, and I am companioned by loneliness — I addressing, hoping, wanting, for the more of myself — I have the art consciousness. Conception feels entirety, it figures not mincingly. Forms in inherence are felt out, not thought out. Feeling mothers thought. Thinking makes definite — feeling makes infinite. Intellection does to emotion what water does to fire. Whatever its means for record it is at best only a scientific process. Conception is the flame from infinite to infinite; calculation is the brief measured space or pause in which the intensity of conception cools. Conception is inexplicable wonder — it is heavenly. Calculation is cold and material. It frightens the spirit away. Conception sees the living beyond; calculation only stares at the immediate and blows out the flames of wonder. Calculation often arrives at its own nothingness. It is no more than mere mental wandering. But art consciousness binds infinity afore to infinity after. It feeds the soul. It is the life spell between breath and breath, between pulse and pulse.

I would ask those who argue that modern art can eliminate emotion to look straight at the modern sun, and give a modern art account of what they see. Or will they yet invent an "artiscope" to examine the intellectual germs in one art germ, and record their calculation in paint and canvas. Will they be able to

register what color in moonlight an art germ has in a flying machine, or in a submarine, or on the Brooklyn Bridge at twilight? Will they be able to record its weight, its density, its temperature? All this intellect may yet do for modern art. But what the spirit, the art consciousness, did for art and for life, as we find it in the great museums, in temples and churches, is a blessing to know, a privilege to see.

I can imagine a cultured Greek of the time of Pericles standing before a representative group of the much discussed modern pictures and sculptures. Also a cultured Chinaman of a great art dynasty or an ancient Persian. And were they each to tell us what they see and feel, what a revelation it would be. And though this is impossible, it would be far better to imagine what they would say than to listen to modern art criticism. It would be far better to see what these ancients did, and to imagine what such people might say. But for us to hear them speak is impossible. If so we must infer — and in such inference we create each for ourselves our own criticism, guided by our own instinctive tastes and by the enduring qualities of the never dying past.

But we must study the antiques. And the more we do so the better are we able to discern the new of to-day, even if the intent differ greatly from the art of the past. There are three great faults in the modern art movements. They move too much and too fast. Too fast in that they throw time off the track of infinity. Modern art is so modern that it runs away from art and leaves art behind. Modernity is the art of the future of yesterday. The old art is of the coming past.

The other day I stood and looked at an Etruscan statue. It smiled its good old peaceful smile, and I asked it at what it smiles forever. And it whispered gently: "At the speed and the noise of modernity."

Purity in Art



MOTION fails when out of something done no spirit oozes. When the maker of a thing invests not his work with that which in master works penetrates the heart and kindles the soul; when matter, plastically reformed, is void of spirit; when it carries no message from the visible universal to the invisible personal, then the intellect calls science and theory to its aid to help make up for the spiritual. But spiritual poverty is even sadder than physical weakness.

How grand and how all is the unknown! The unknown of the unborn is I feel infinitely more than the known of the born. In so imagining the seeming-being, how much more real do we make what we know. How much more significant becomes the finite! How much more intimate we become with the known when we crave to know the unknown. How neighborly are our senses to the potential forms and their significance. I am rich, I am exuberant, I am spirited when I infer the beyond, the inherent unknown — infinite, spaceless, timeless, matterless. In such overwhelming breathless moments, I embrace the entirety of the unknown. I am then a self-more, more with more of the measureless dimensions. I feel self growing in self. Is this not life? To invest art, whatever be the means, with one's spirit self, though yet un-lived and unborn, tends to pure expression. This purity is omnipotent, all inclusive. Every birth, every

growth, comes to speak and to prove itself with its coming an infinitesimal portion of the infinite. That which we live and infer is its counterpart. Birth is the mark between infinity afore and after. It is that mark or event in time where and when infinity speaks. With birth comes the finite. Through birth infinity emerges into the visible finite. The finite, if perceived, creates a new momentum towards a new entry into the infinite. It inhales as it were of the infinite and exhales its relief in sighs spiritual or ecstasy placid. It needs no proof, no science to come to its aid. Science or theory but mars it. For it cuts its identity, ruins its unity and mis-traces the intent of its origin.

Ah, what color is there
And what light.
What other space
And what other time
Or what other ALL is there?

This, to infer more and more, as we live, and this to reveal, as we ripen, is expression pure. The purpose of such expression fails not in creating the most fitting means. Means that deaden not the sensibilities and quench not the flame. Means that hinder not, repress not the inner urge, the inner voice. Pure expression kneads its means; it caresses, it disseminates matter. It humanizes the inanimate till the clay, or the color, the wood or the fabric speak for us. Expression pure compels through intimate tactile power and spiritual motion of time. Expression pure is prophecy, is power and warmth that reaches out of a work of art

and needs no outside aid to call forth perceptive participation. It conveys itself into the heart of the spectator and stirs in him emotion, hoped for and conceived by the creator. Expression pure goes never amiss, even if its journey be ever so long. Purity is a quality that on its way into infinity will not mix and will repel forces unlike herself. Purity loses not its identity. Purity is of a spiritual velocity that makes even infinity expand. Purity is the heavenly light that makes brighter the light of the earthly. It lights the way toward perfection, and perfection is but a pause in the infinite. This pause in realization, this perfection, comes only of purity, which opens the doors to the beyond. The time between a thing of quality or of purity and the one that follows is this pause — pure urges action pure and again a pause.

The ideal is the pause and the real is the child of the ideal. If this be the relationship, the genealogy, the birth, the expression is pure. Thus purity of expression is like the longevity of races. Although time and clime and the unexpected and unaccounted for modify or evolve however much or little, the origin is the same — the magnet of like to like keeps and binds them together. The magnet between beginning and ending, the spirit-magnet that draws the essence of matter to spirit.

The moment purity begins to die or wane — purity the call of perfection — perfection the call of the infinite, this call, or call and its echo, growing fainter — then birth or expression dies and suffers the agony of mediocrity, or of aboriginality, until intellectual despondence and infamous impurities arise.

Purity may be achieved out of a variety of samenesses or likenesses. To avoid monotony in this respect is a work of rare power. For in elimination one knows the discarded as well as the chosen. Purity makes its demand. Realization gives it over to matter and time. To keep the one large out of the many large, to keep the one small out of a million small, the one blue out of the million blues; to put together the like with the like and to obtain variety, is an achievement toward simplicity and rarity, and therefore of purity. The ancients prove this as also do the great modern artists. The great strength underlying the principles of art, call out of the infinite to be embodied and demand realization. With simplest means one is safe on the way to purity of expression. The fundamental principles of art are the guide posts that mark the way; and not this alone — the very matter in the means of expression seems to want in its inanimate way to help make for this purity. Matter suffers when treated uninspiringly. I feel that the violin enjoys being in the hands of a master musician — she communes with him; for tones love to be so disintegrated that they speak or joy or weep for the inner, locked in the heart, and they love to make figures of color-sound. I feel that pigments love to be so juxtaposed by a gifted colorist as to pour forth a veritable garden of aroma to the eye; that forms or volumes love to be so constructed that they thunder with visual volumes of silence in their own domains; that words are pleased to come from the lips of wisdom and to clothe fittingly inspired thought; and that the wood or clay or iron knows when it is being used or shaped by creative loving hands.

When form and color speak their own language and serve expression, instantly fired or spontaneously conceived — then expression in its distinct abode is on the way to purity, its means being the natural vehicle. When with form and color, words or tone, the inner dormant range of tints and of moods is expressed, expression is on the way to purity. I say on the way, for infinity is the road to Eternity, and to fill eternity with the ripest and sanest expression of our consciousness is the essence as well as the purpose of life.

Purity in art, like creative thought, opens infinity with the key of pure living. It penetrates, it pierces matter.

In expression pure, thought thinks ideas not words; color thinks not chromatics or the science of pigments, form thinks not geometry nor physics nor chemistry. Expression pure feels the physical laws governing matter. It never turns art into a science or a process. When thought wanders, when expression is not pure or constructive, it searches for means, but when thought or expression flows by pressure of the inner urge or message, then means happen and are secondary. When art calculates, it creates a chasm between expression and means, and the more it calculates the more do the means predominate, until the intent of expression goes amiss. The inner urge or expression pure cools through calculation, and science bars its birth — its emergence.

Expression pure flows like the mountain stream, flowing from infinity into infinity, making its bed, finding its way as it flows, flows, flows. And as the stream fills the sea, so expression fills the soul. The

flow of the stream dances and ripples in the dazzling sun, bounds over rocks, over hills, and then joys and rhymes its way into infinity. In calm and in passion, in the strife to reach, flows the stream, flows expression — from the soul again the soul to fill.

The Equilibrium of the Inanimate



TO whatever extent form might be carried in sculpture, architecture, or decoration, the principles of organization — the wonder and gratification of equilibrium, of nature's infinite formations of its own master creations form the basis of all art. Consistently directed energy, impulsed by emotion, derived and conceived from contact, actual experience and intent observation, as well as the urge of the spiritual, and an inner individual correspondence of soul and matter, come of the breathlessness and poetry inspired in man by the grandeur of the outer visible calling forth the hidden invisible and so transplant nature into art. Matter as dealt with in art expression has its earthly physical properties, and also its spiritual destiny and significance. Matter lying still and invisible in its waiting performs a function. Matter always waits for spirit — spirit as guided by nature's own laws points out its way.

The artist soon recognizes that the laws of art are like the physical properties of matter, which hold atoms together.

The feeling of art-form in us should correspond to the very laws of energy, of consistency, of equilibrium, of adhesion and cohesion, of gravity in nature. Questful living constantly seeks for means of correspondence with matter elements, seeks for means peculiar to the instincts and gifts of the one in quest for the ever more. The physical laws, being

of matter, when spiritualized, are transformed to art or poetry. The physical laws of matter must be felt into becoming the spiritual laws of art.

One outer touch or stroke upon matter, if only embodied with physical energy — and with high spiritual desire or purpose, extracts outwardly, visibly, its inner hidden essence. To impregnate emptiness with form, to charge hovering spirit with visible sound and with the acoustics of vision, yea, of optics, stirring light and dark and color; to fill waiting weighless space with weight of shape — to fill space with form; and to possess the spirit breath of all this, in the flame of exaltation, is art. The very fluid of energy — the flame made concrete, the emotion, the craving given birth to, breathed as it were into matter, becomes art. Space thus enlivened and matter form thus illumined by light, augment each other into still greater particular excellence.

The energy or inner life of matter, and its destiny of equilibrium, compelled what is known as geometry into existence. The sphere, the cube, the cylinder and the various single and intersected solids are forms that grew out of the necessity for form existence. The difference of form in material objects is the race difference of matter species. The intersection of solids is like a marriage for a new form to come. Every unconscious bit of matter is still conscious enough to want to be the form of some geometric identity. Hence it finds a place for itself in the abstract wandering onwardness of space and time. Matter remains not dust-like or hovers not in chaotic atoms. Magnetism, energy, cohesion make form. Such forms destine matter and determine its plastic

poetic character and its quality of duration in the spiritual domain as perceived by the artist. The correspondence of varied forms, simple or intricate, minute or colossal, achieves the great universal unity, rhythm or that greatest of energies — gravity in Being.

The inanimate has its own nature of resistance; it has consistency and a correspondence through an inner energy, as humans correspond through actions and words expressive of thought. The artist must commune with matter to caress it, to compel it into a desired re-organized form — or a unit of forms — the essence of his contact with nature. Matter has its own particular form of volition. It apprehends the relationships of weight, measure, scale and direction and of the combination of planes, or of resistance when colored and exposed to light. As weight, dimension or energy or durability are elements irrespective of their specific embodiment, place or position, so ought these to be dealt with purely as only abstract elements or potential qualities in matter-form. This affords an opening into the very eternity of form. These infinite variations offer the greatest possible means for arriving at a realization of the infinity of form.

To express moods that stir the emotion from within as does music, the plastic artist when he conceives of energetic rhythmic interlaced forms or units should be much more moved than even by music. It is like cementing a thought, or arresting a perfect moment of time, or like giving body to space, or solidity to air, or colored light to darkness. An artist should hope to evoke with grains of matter the very atoms of color and time. He should feel as though he empowered the silent with speech and the static with motion; and should

seem to angle the light and to impregnate the three dimensions with a spiritual fourth dimension. If not spiritually conceived or transfigured by great inspiration, matter is dead. This is proved by many monuments and buildings, ancient and modern, which are only so many lifeless lumps.

Architecture, while abstract, is less abstract or subjective than the form the subjective sculptor desires. Architecture is one of the great applied arts. Utility, even in its grandest efforts or achievements, subjects the subjective to the concrete objective. Utility or application often introduces that dangerous difference between worth and value, between the spiritual and the material, or between poetry and fact. Utility makes spirit subservient to matter, while art makes matter yield to its own use.

Each abstract form is at once in itself an expression of a living idea, the spirit rhythm and unity of form.

Objects in vertical, horizontal or oblique, or of whatever form or quantity evoking our senses of perception, are proof of a living force even in the inanimate. It is this very energy of matter that one should hope to make spiritually dynamic. The fact that even the most insignificant objects attract our attention is proof of a form of life in the inanimate. The oblique has for me a wonderful fascination. In it one finds action of infinite surprise, wonder and expectancy. It is the more stirring, the most significant action of the several directions including the curve. It is the physical or material so charged with the poetry of form that it awakens the spiritual senses. It is this state or position or volume of the objects of the three dimensions whether static or in motion, that

gives nucleus to scale, to weight and to other properties.

It is through an intermarriage of forms, enlivened each with its own destiny of position — horizontal, vertical or oblique — that one is to awaken emotions of awe, grandeur and wonder, even to exaltation. And thus I am brought nearer to the realization of a spiritual rhythm, an inner energy, urging the unknown to become known; manifesting itself at its best, at its highest, when fired with human life.

Art is the very fluid of energy made concrete — the rhythmic spiritual energy revealing more and more, opening infinity. Or it is like the ripples on the surface of water caused by the touch of the fingers, or like the vibrations of sound, never, never to end, only to blend with other vibrations, pulsing onward, charging as it were infinity with infinity, echo waking echo, and so on, forever on.

It should be the aim to charge matter, to invest it with emotion, with spirit, with mood, with reflection, even with a hope of the beyond gained from experience through perception of the worlds of form without. In these abstract forms of the purely plastic domain, the mental and spiritual embodiment are constantly one. The sculptural means must yield to the poetic desire to reveal. It should not be the purpose to duplicate nature or to represent it. Art dies when the natural dominates. I believe that the *expression* of an experience must go further than the experience that gave rise to the expression thereof. The expression of an experience whatever the art or the means should give rise to still another, a newer and a still more inspiring experience.

Art Purpose



IN conscious being there is purpose. Purpose is a state of motion, of motion colored by hope, the hope of quality, such as makes for infinity. Purpose is an inner urge to know one's self in living activity. Living-being is an ambitious spiritual purpose to transcend, to rise, to mount, not merely to shift position or to change view. Living-being has a deep docile intensity that puts us on the journey toward perfection — a state of quality that waits in the onwardness of time. It ennobles or ripens character and comes through rare and high personal achievement only. Of the cloth achievement, the threads are drawn from time. For there is no perfection — no end to time, no end to achievement. Perfection or achievement moves with time which never ends. The striving after perfection, the very journey, is the reward of perfection in the beyond. Perfection is richer that cannot be possessed. The desire is its reward. Perfection will not allow itself to be possessed. And like time — the end is the beginning. Perfection from a spiritual point of view is the magnet of time.

As living-being only marks time, *creative* living-being colors time. Achievements of spiritual worth mark the way into infinity. Amassing material wealth or power is merely a state of being in busyness. It is even a state of stand-stillness. It may shift matter or property from point to point in a chaotic directionless, purposeless way. It is merely a personal definitely

limited time-having of things. Possession or covetousness keeps things from the way to infinity. It retards motion of time. There is no such thing as personal material possession. If so, it is against the law of spiritual harmony, for it causes strife. Spirit is that personal possession, having in its nature that which gives to all and which being in time on the way to infinity, moves to intellectual peace, or adjustment. It binds the scattered into one and so ever intensifies unity. Wisdom is the right of everybody in whatever state of material plane. Having-being finites matter, stops time, loses direction and proportion, shuts out light; but living-being infinities matter. Having-being starves and shrinks; living-being flourishes and enriches time with hope of the infinite.

True liberation and the democratization of the races will come only when mankind will realize that sheer "possessing" arrests human radiation and causes animal selfishness and fear, while art ferments human radiation and results in spiritual universality and brotherhood. Matter is merely matter; it lies and knows not. Matter inbreathed with spirit, moves and transcends; it illumines darkness, and fills emptiness, and enlivens even the vacuous. Only through art do we apprehend what would otherwise be arid and spiritless, invisible and unheard. By taking cognizance of matter through art principles — we learn to know life better. The best of life goes into art. Through form we learn what is formless and colorless. Through art we learn grace and grandeur. It urges us therefore to create and to invest the inanimate with the life of our life, with our own energy. Art forms carry us from sphere to sphere.

A vase is that embodiment of human emotional energy and spirit in matter, which would otherwise wander in chaotic atoms in the lostness and the unknownness of space and time. So are other forms of expression. Great shafts like those of the historic Karnak are eternal living plants through which flow heavenward the very juices of earth and the spiritual essences of man. The great temples are like gardens and vineyards; the great mosaics and tapestries are veritable flower-beds with lasting aroma and color. The great symphonies are the voices of invisible and angelic spheres.

Art cannot be, will not be possessed or monopolized. Art is the one great universal possession and gift. Art will give herself to him who wants her and needs her. It is the great democratizing force. It is peace giving. It is made of worth only, and recognizes worth from whatever sources it comes. Art is transitional — it adds worth to worthiness and is ever onward. Ownership — material possession, is fixed and if it turns not into a spiritual having-being and giving, it stifles and decays.

I pass the flower bed. I live the flowers, their colors and fragrance. This is pure individual having-being. Leaving the flowers for others to live them in the sense that I did, is the truest kind of democracy. Things of beauty, things of love, things of worth, and the emotions they evoke, are universal-belonging, and therefore the greatest means for democracy. Humanity has yet fully to learn how to be conscious of the living spirit in the inanimate worlds. This they will learn through an appreciation and an awareness of the fundamental art forms. This they will learn when they know how to discriminate between matter value and

spiritual worth. Once aware of this, the individual is possessor of the spirit of the inanimate and the animated and this is the living-possessing and the universal sharing. Art forms make the spirit bridge between matter and soul. This is the gift of living — the right of every human being. This possessing is the very life process. Robbing humans of this life-right is criminal for it foreruns tyranny and slavery. But the human spirit, whether imprisoned or denied, in the course of time, bursts the imposed matter-bounds and the soul flames into art, and liberates and endows all.

It is a proof of the invincible power of spirituality, of expression, of living-possession, when art survives and re-appears after tyranny. And from this we can infer how much more pure humanity might have been, had matter been more embodied with spirit. Has not the best of human energy and of life been wasted on war, and on theft? Art affords us this contrast. Only after a terrible calamity and a realization of the futility of possession do we know this better. Greed and war change the geographical boundaries of countries, but spirit is measureless, boundless, universal. Spirit or art form induce quality, but war or greed results in a materialism that retards the onwardness and ripeness of time, and wounds and destroys the fruit of the soul. Greed and possession are the enemies of art. War is the symbol of the materially weak; art is the symbol of the spiritually strong. Art removes boundaries; for it is universal. War or materialism narrows and works in secrecy; art opens and universalizes. Materialism and greed poison and destroy all human tenderness. Art comes from the very heavens,

soothes the heart, clears and elevates the mind and purifies. Art grooves hard into materialism and makes a path for the soul. It neutralizes and personifies. It is the very antithesis of greed.

The materialist asks of what use are art forms, and the infidel asks of what use is prayer. Both ask the question to which the dumb beasts find answer in the satisfaction of their hunger. Art like faith cannot be explained away. It is the faith found in feeling, the feeling that comes of an art consciousness, the consciousness of spirit inherent in matter.

Again, the art purpose is the great human purpose, the great spiritual agency. The fundamental principles of art are the very beams of life. Art is spirit personified — the crystallization of universality. See how in the history of civilization it crowned great religious fervor, how it embodied deep human emotion in deathless forms. Through art, time filters, as it were.





